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Sleep and Mental Health

Sleep Loss Impacts Risk of Metabolic Disease

Many have heard that getting sufficient sleep is helpful to weight loss, but ongoing research is beginning to discover just how this link may be occurring. A group of European endocrinologists have found that sleep loss and sleep disturbances are linked to metabolic disease – specifically obesity and type 2 diabetes. Their research suggests that screening people at risk for these conditions for their sleep quality may open an avenue of intervention previously unconsidered.

Impact of Sleep Deprivation

Do you ever feel like you're going to go "crazy" when you're lacking sleep? An interesting study from Germany has found that just 24 hours of sleep deprivation was able to replicate the 3 main dimensions of schizophrenia: thought disorder, perceptual aberrations, and negative symptoms! It's already been noted that schizophrenics suffer from sleep disturbances and this information may lead to better understanding of this complicated condition.

Seasons and Sleep

Astrology may or may not hold some seeds of truth, but an epidemiologic study has found a relationship between what season you're born in and the likelihood of your suffering from a mood disorder. Winter birth was found to be associated with depression while summer birth was linked to bipolar disorder. Researchers hastened to add that the influence was small – genetics and environment also play roles – but intriguing.

Vitamin D & Schizophrenia

Vitamin D continues to undergo study of the role it plays in various biological functions and a deficiency of it has now been linked to the development of schizophrenia – in fact, it more than doubles the risk! Furthermore, when diagnosed schizophrenics were tested, 65% had low vitamin D levels. Further study is needed to determine if correcting vitamin D levels can protect against schizophrenia or treat it.

We are only just beginning to understand how the brain functions – and its dysfunctions! Mental health is more than the absence of mental illness, it is a state of well-being. If you have questions, don't be afraid to talk to your pharmacist.